

# **Paul R. Messinger – Licensed Funeral Director Handout**

## **RELATED FACTS & THOUGHTS:**

Funeral service in Arizona is licensed by the Arizona State Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. This Board licenses, oversees and disciplines Funeral Establishments, Funeral Directors, Embalmers and Interns training to become Embalmers, Crematories, and Cremationists.

There are just under 160 licensed funeral establishments (funeral homes or mortuaries). They are distributed across the state in most metropolitan areas; each caring for from 100 to 1400 deceased persons, annually.

There are 47 crematories, with between 75 and 80 actual cremation retorts. Cremations are utilized on over 50% of Arizona deaths today. Likely, each crematory could cremate 6 to 12 human bodies per 24 hrs. (2500-3000+ per week). Funeral establishments and cemeteries provide both funeral service or work and the goods needed at times of human deaths. With a major pandemic event (one which is national or world wide, causing massive fatalities) the need for these services and the related goods would increase tremendously. The only way to meet this demand is to plan for such an event in advance, actually have much of the material needs, and have the human needs worked out or laid aside in advance.

It is impossible to project the needs without a projection of the numbers of deaths over a given period of time in a mass fatality event. Without this estimate, it behooves prudent people to expand their ability to provide for this care in advance.

A pandemic event means the need is nationwide or worldwide. There would be little or no re-stocking of goods or ability to draw staff help from other (non-effected) parts of the state, nation or world; only the plans and goods laid aside in advance could be utilized.

A single or multiple mass event would likely mean that staffing and goods could be moved from unaffected parts of the state or nation to meet needs of this event

Funeral Directors and Cemeterians are making plans, training staff and preparing for both a pandemic and single or multiple mass fatality event and hope to never need to use them. Capacity, because of the planning over the past two years is greater today then it was in the past. Our suppliers have been expanding their inventories to meet greater needs also.